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AUTHOR	Seymour, Susan C.
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ABSTRACT

This book describes a 30-year longitudinal study of the impact of urbanization and modernization on changing family organization, child rearing practices, and gender roles in India and their contribution to women's life satisfaction. The book is organized around a series of personal encounters recorded in field notes, focusing on the mothers, daughters, and grandmothers of 130 children in Bhubaneswar, Orissa. The book introduces a system of family structure and gender roles based on different cultural assumptions than those predominant in contemporary United States, describes the variety of family systems and child rearing practices present in India, and examines assumptions about culture and human development. Chapter 1 describes the patrilocal family structure and ideology and the town of Bhubaneswar. Chapter 2 presents the research strategies used. Chapter 3 describes child rearing practices observed in 1965-67 and examines gender differences in the child rearing practices. Chapter 4 compares family life in the Old Town, comprised of a hierarchy of caste Hindu communities and the New Capital, dominated by a hierarchy of government employees. Chapter 5 focuses on poor-low-status families for whom poverty, more than location, determines women's lives. Chapters 6 and 7 address the changes in women's lives precipitated by new educational opportunities for girls and the perspectives of three generations of women to changes in education, family life, and gender roles. Chapter 8 compares findings from Bhubaneswar to those in other parts of India and examines theories of modernization in relationship to different cultural constructions of personhood. Contains approximately 150 references. (KB)

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